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Diana T Fritz 03/15/2007 03:08:04 PM From DB/Inbox: Search Results

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SIPDIS  
TELEGRAM

March 07, 2004

To: No Action Addressee  
Action: Unknown  
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 630 - UNKNOWN)  
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, PARM, MOPS  
Captions: None  
Subject: SCENESETTER FOR GENERAL ABIZAID'S VISIT TO THE UAE  
Ref: None

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S E C R E T ABU DHABI 00630

SIPDIS  
CXABU:  
ACTION: POL  
INFO: USLO RSO DAO AMB DCM P/M ECON

DISSEMINATION: POL  
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:MMWAHBA  
DRAFTED: POL:JFMAYBURY  
CLEARED: DCM:RAALBRIGHT, USLO:RSIMM, DAO:BKERINS, CG:JDAVIS

VZCZCADI428  
OO RUCAACC RUCNRAQ RUEKJCS RUEHC RHEFDIA  
DE RUEHAD #0630/01 0671409  
ZNY SSSSS ZZH  
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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
TO RUCAACC/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE  
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//OSD/NESA//  
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3440  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 04 ABU DHABI 000630

SIPDIS

NOFORN

CENTCOM FOR POLAD AMB LITT AND CCJ2  
NSC FOR THEROUX  
DOD FOR OSD/ISA/NESA  
STATE FOR NEA/ARP, NEA/NGA AND PM/RSAT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/06/2014  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PARM](#) [MOPS](#) [GCC](#) [IZ](#) [TC](#)  
SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR GENERAL ABIZAID'S VISIT TO  
THE UAE

Ref: (A) Abu Dhabi 568 (B) State 35891, (C) Abu Dhabi  
286

Classified by Ambassador Marcelle M. Wahba, reasons  
1.5 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) General Abizaid: I would like to welcome you  
back to the UAE. During your visit, we have requested  
meetings with Abu Dhabi Deputy Crown Prince and UAE

Armed Forces Chief of Staff LTG Shaykh Muhammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan (MbZ), and Dubai Crown Prince General Shaykh Muhammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum (MbR). Your itinerary in the UAE will include a visit to the Al Dhafra Air Base for a visit to the Gulf Air Warfare Center.

12. (C) In your visit, our Emirati hosts will be interested to hear your views on the latest developments in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as your perspective on the Greater Middle East initiative, especially the security component.

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Suggested Themes  
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13. (S) We propose that you touch on the following key bilateral military issues, in addition to the more general themes below in para four:

-- Express concern about the status of pending major weapons acquisition programs, specifically the F-16 and E2-C (MbZ);

-- Offer congratulations for the success of the inaugural course recently concluded at the Gulf Air Warfare Center (MbZ);

-- Express enthusiasm for our first Joint Military Commission on May 1-2 in Abu Dhabi as a forum for high-level strategic dialogue on mutual bilateral issues (MbZ);

-- Provide a look ahead on our likely military footprint both in the UAE specifically and the region more generally (MbZ, MbR);

-- If raised, note that the Greater Middle East Initiative is an effort to support reforms that must emanate from the region (MbZ, MbR).

14. (S) More broadly, you may also wish to:

-- Express thanks for the UAE's exemplary support for U.S. and coalition efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, namely access to bases and logistical support, including the continuing UAE SOC deployment at Bagram, as well as extensive intelligence coordination. The UAE is on the verge of sending Emirati intel officers to CJTF-7 in Baghdad and CJTF-180 in Afghanistan to work with U.S. forces. Major General Fast visited the UAE March 6 to brief military intelligence professionals and deploying DMI officers. Reassure MbZ that we are still intent upon deploying Seeker II UAV's at the earliest possible opportunity;

-- Consult and provide assurances on need to maintain Iraq's territorial integrity, minimize external influence (Iran) and manage sectarian rivalries (MbZ, MbR);

-- Express appreciation for UAEG's condemnation of terror acts, as well as its financial support for Iraq reconstruction (MbZ, MbR);

-- (If raised) Discuss our intelligence engagement, particularly cooperation with the UAE in Iraq and Afghanistan (MbZ).

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BILATERAL MILITARY ISSUES  
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Shift in Budget Priorities?  
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15. (S) The UAE's decision to reject the F-16 Block 60

Training FMS Case is a serious setback to this key engagement program. Major General Khalid al Buainain, UAE Air Force and Air Defense Commander, indicated that the decision was largely driven by the cost of the program. Although the USG portion of the case is relatively modest (\$85 million for two years, with an option for five years at \$178 million), the UAE estimates that the total cost (logistics and personnel support, including transportation, per diem, family housing, vehicles, medical and dental, etc.) will be closer to \$1 billion. In lieu of US-based F-16 Block 60 training, the UAE has requested USAF Instructor Pilots and a Technical Assistance Field Team to assist them with training in the UAE. Such an option is unlikely, since USAF has no surplus of F-16 IPs or maintainers to dedicate to UAE. We are examining options to support our partners in this dilemma, and hope to impress upon UAE leadership the complexity of the F-16 Block 60 weapons system and our ability to help them succeed in the critical training arena. As of this writing, MGen. Khalid was scheduled to lead a UAE delegation to the U.S. on March 9 to explore alternatives.

16. (S) Concurrent with the UAE decision to reject the F-16 Block 60 Training Case, we have learned that UAE will also delay or reject a draft request to acquire ATACMS/HIMARS. This decision is also reportedly due to the cost of the weapons system. Meanwhile, we have been unable to obtain a commitment on several other key FMS and DCS programs, including the AH-64 Apache A-to-D Remanufacture, E-2C Hawkeye, and Harpoon. All of these LOAs have expired without comment from UAE. Taken in conjunction with proposals for several other large, pending US programs (such as SIGINT aircraft, Enhanced Sea Sparrow Missile, Combat Training Center, and Remote Sensing), we believe UAE may be over-extended in their defense budget. We are attempting to obtain an understanding of UAE's current and future year defense priorities in order to assist them with an integrated and executable acquisition, operations, and maintenance plan.

17. (S) We are awaiting an OSD policy decision on the issue of the UAE's desire to procure the Predator B. The Emiratis believe this system will provide the UAE with the much-needed capability to survey and defend its long, porous coasts, islands, and inland borders. They are not interested in the Predator A.

#### Air Warfare Center

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18. (C) The opening of the GAWC at Al Dhafra Air Base outside Abu Dhabi illustrates the expanding nature of our bilateral military relationship with the UAE. Our two air forces have worked together for at least three years to bring this project to fruition. Our bilateral and regional interests also are served by broadening our presence and access at Al Dhafra, an important strategic facility in the Gulf. The inaugural course was held January 24-February 24 (ref C). Graduates hailed from the UAE, the UK, and the U.S. At both the inaugural and graduation ceremonies, MGen. Khalid emphasized that cultural interoperability was as important as the training. We assessed this first course to be a success and look to build upon the lessons learned for the coming classes, the next of which is set for May.

#### Joint Military Commission

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19. (C) The first JMC between our two countries is scheduled for May 1-2 in Abu Dhabi. Our agenda priorities will be the Global War on Terrorism, counter-proliferation, and the burgeoning regional narcotics trade and its relationship to terrorism. We

have solicited UAE participation in developing a mutual agenda for discussion and are awaiting their input.

#### Regional Footprint

¶10. (S) If appropriate, I would recommend that you outline with the leadership - MbZ - what we see in terms of our likely regional footprint, and specifically what we have in mind for the UAE. MbZ and his Air Force Commander have dropped strong hints at being open to a more robust presence, but we need to prepare them for the direction in which we may wish to move here, before we submit a basing plan to Congress where the UAE will be mentioned.

#### "The Greater Middle East"

¶11. (C) There have been no official UAEG pronouncements on the new Greater Middle East (GME) plan. The local media have expressed frustration that Arabs have not been consulted about this new initiative. The press has carried the text of the proposal that was leaked to "Al Hayat" and there have been several op-ed articles about the issue. We have seen only one reference to the security component of the Greater Middle East initiative (ref B). Essentially, it is that the USG wants to engage governments in working together with the U.S. and European allies (through NATO) to address common security concerns, including proliferation, terrorism, and border security; to improve the interoperability of forces so we can work together more effectively in stability and peacekeeping operations; and to offer individual countries of the GME region these opportunities, on an entirely voluntary basis. We recommend that you tell MbZ and MbR that we agree that reform should come from within the Middle East.

#### Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement

¶12. (C) Due to the direct personal involvement of MbZ and UAE Air Force Chief of Staff Mgen Khalid, we are making progress on an ACSA. Talks between GHQ, CENTCOM J4, and USLO on March 7 were very productive and we believe we are very close to an agreement on the language.

#### BROADER ISSUES

#### Afghanistan and Iraq: Support for Coalition Efforts

¶13. (S) The UAE Armed Forces has deployed a 35-man Emirati Special Operations contingent to Bagram Air Base. The Directorate for Military Intelligence has requested to assign intelligence officers to Iraq and Afghanistan. As you know, the UAE continues to play a very helpful role in Afghanistan, particularly in the provision of humanitarian and reconstruction assistance. The UAE Armed Forces provided the Afghan National Army with approximately \$50 million in assistance in kind in 2002. Total assistance is more than \$150 million. This includes over \$50 million in humanitarian assistance, a \$30 million pledge for development assistance, plus costs of deploying special forces to Bagram. The UAEG also continues to provide substantial personal financial support for President Karzai.

¶14. (S) Additionally, UAE plans to deploy its squadron of Seeker II UAVs to Bagram beginning in late summer ¶2004. Although this deployment was delayed from the

original plan (December 2003) due to environmental and operational constraints at Bagram, preparations are on-track and we are working the details to ensure a successful deployment.

#### Iraq: Financial Support and Timely Public Statements

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¶15. (U) We understand that the UAE has disbursed the \$215 million pledge made at Madrid both in providing humanitarian assistance and on buying Siemens generators for power plants in Iraq. In addition, on February 28-29, Abu Dhabi hosted a successful follow-up Iraq donors' conference that confirmed the donors, the UN, and the World Bank were all cooperating on behalf of Iraq. The Emiratis continue to issue strong public statements against terror attacks, such as the ones that occurred on March 2 in Baghdad and Karbala (ref A).

#### Iran: Worries Persist

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¶16. (S) All of our senior Emirati interlocutors worry about Iran's intentions in Iraq and in the Arabian Gulf region as a whole. Iran is one of the major reasons the UAE has been pursuing acquisition of ATACMS, remote sensing technology, and is so keen to get Predator. The Emiratis have urged us to help prevent Iran from meddling in Iraq's domestic affairs. They view Iran's nuclear program with deep concern and have consistently supported a tough approach by the IAEA.

#### Intelligence engagement (If raised)

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¶17. (S) If MbZ talks about the threat from Iran, or from Afghans or Al Qaida, we would recommend that you describe some of the ways we are helping the UAE. U.S. intelligence agencies are assisting the Space and Reconnaissance Center to consolidate its mapping functions. The U.S. and UAE are working with the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency to obtain air photo interpretation training. CENTCOM is providing technical assistance and advice to the UAE to create an intelligence fusion center that will give threat indications and warnings to the UAE leadership. The UAE is also taking steps to re-energize efforts to conclude a SIGINT agreement.

WAHBA